(a) concessional custom duty and excise duty exemption;

(b) 80% accelerated depreciation in the first year;

(c) tax holidays on income from the power projects;

(d) exemption from local sales tax in some States.

A target of 700 MW has been fixed for biomass power/bagasse based co-generation projects for tenth five-year plan.

Price-Rise of wheat, rice and cereals

601. SHRI JANARADHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether prices of wheat, rice and other cereals are on the increase;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures proposed to be taken to control the price-rise and ensure their availability through the PDS?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLMUDDIN): (a) and (b) Among the cereals in the Wholsesale Price Index (WPI), the annual percentage variations in the prices of wheat and jowar as on 4.2.06 are higher in comparison to those prevailing a year ago as indicated below:

	Annual % variation in the WPI	
Cereals	As on 4.2.2006	Corresponding period in last year
Rice	2.2	2.4
Wheat	8.8	-0.8
Jowar	11.3	3.2
Bajra	11.5	19.1
Maize	8.7	5.1
Barley	10.7	11.5
Ragi	3.7	-6.9

(c) The measures taken by the Government include the following:

(i) Increased allocation of wheat under the Open Market Sale Scheme;

(ii) Freeze on the Central Issue Prices of wheat and rice under the Targeted Public Distribution system (TPDS) in order to encourage more off-take;

(iii) Decision to import 5 lakh tonnes of wheat for augmenting the availability in the southern Zone;

(iv) Ensuring adequate availability of stocks of wheat and rice for the TPDS and Welfare Schemes in all the States of the country.

(v) Daily Monitoring of retail and wholesale proces of wheat and rice.

Consumer goods through FPSs

602. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are in talks with various State Government to encourage sale of new categories of consumer goods, including petroleum products, biscuits, soaps and toiletries, through fair price shops;

(b) if so, the status of the dialogue and response from the States, so far; and

(c) the other steps being taken to popularize the use of fair price shops?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) At present the Central Government makes available wheat, rice, sugar and K. Oil under the Public Distribution System to the State Government for distribution through the Fair Price Shops (FPS). In order to increase the viability of FPSs, under the System, the State Governments have been advised to allow the FPSs, to deal with other items of daily consumption/use also. Some States have already allowed sale of such items through the FPSs. For LPG/Kerosene, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has not agreed with the proposal as it is